

BEFORE THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

MICHAEL ATKINSON,
Charging Party

-v-

BIG HORN COUNTY, BIG HORN COUNTY
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, CORPORAL
TERRILL BRACKEN, SERGEANT MATT
EDWARDS, SHERIFF LAWRENCE PETE
BIG HAIR, & UNDERSHERIFF MIKE FUSS,
Respondent

HRB CASE NO. 0131015875, 0131015876,
0131015877, 0131015878,
0131015879, & 0131015880

ORDER
FINAL AGENCY DECISION

Charging Party, Michael Atkinson (Atkinson), filed a complaint with the Department of Labor and Industry (Department) alleging discrimination in employment on the basis of sex and retaliation. Following an informal investigation, the Department determined that a preponderance of the evidence did not support Atkinson's allegations that Respondent, Big Horn County, et al, discriminated against Atkinson. The Department issued a Notice of Dismissal. Atkinson filed an objection with the Montana Human Rights Commission (Commission). The Commission considered the matter on September 19, 2013. Elizabeth Best appeared and argued on behalf of Atkinson. Calvin Stacey appeared and argued on behalf of Big Horn County, et al.

The Commission reviews a decision of the Department to dismiss a complaint using an abuse of discretion standard. *Section 49-2-511(2), MCA*. After careful consideration, the Commission concludes the determination of the Department to dismiss the complaint in this case is not an abuse of discretion.

If a charging party chooses to commence a civil action in district court, the charging party has 90 days after the date this order is issued to file a complaint in district court, in the district

where the alleged violation occurred, and seek appropriate relief. *Section 49-2-511(3)(a), MCA.*

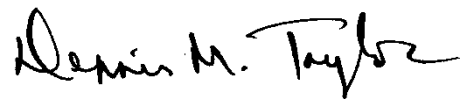
If a charging party fails to commence a civil action within 90 days, the claims are time barred.

Id.

Alternatively, a party may ask a district court to review the decision of the Commission to affirm the dismissal of a complaint. *Sections 2-4-702 and 49-2-511(3)(b), MCA.* This review must be requested within 30 days of the date of this order. A party must promptly serve copies of a petition for judicial review upon the Human Rights Commission and all parties of record. *Section 2-4-702(2), MCA.*

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, that Michael Atkinson's objection is **overruled**. The Commission affirms the determination of the Human Rights Bureau to dismiss the complaint against Big Horn County, Big Horn County Sheriff's Department, Corporal Terrill Bracken, Sergeant Matt Edwards, Sheriff Lawrence Pete Big Hair, and Undersheriff Mike Fuss.

DATED this 24th day of September, 2013.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dennis M. Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dennis M. Taylor, Chair
Human Rights Commission

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned secretary for the Human Rights Commission certifies that a true and correct copy of the foregoing NOTICE OF TIME AND PLACE OF CONSIDERATION OF was mailed to the following by U.S. Mail, postage prepaid, on this 24th day of September, 2013.

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Annah Smith, Legal Secretary
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